

CITY OF WESTMINSTER, COLORADO

PRL VISION PLAN

PHASE 1 ENGAGEMENT REPORT

OVERVIEW

The City of Westminster Parks, Recreation, and Libraries (PRL) Vision Plan seeks meaningful and inclusive community engagement early and frequently throughout the planning process. Purposeful and sincere outreach is critical to cultivating public trust, expanding support for the plan, addressing concerns early in the process, and building a sense of ownership for plan implementation.

This summary presents constituent and community engagement strategies and results that took place from August 23, 2023 through November 15, 2022. This stage of outreach included a robust series of engagement opportunities that engaged with nearly 1,600 Westminster constituents and community members at the time of this publication. Additional public engagement is planned throughout the planning process.

The PRL Department core team and planning consultants (the project team) utilized a variety of engagement tools to gather valuable feedback from the community regarding their experiences, challenges, opportunities, and values related to the City's PRL facilities and programs. The purpose of these conversations was to:

- Introduce the project and stimulate community-wide awareness of the planning effort
- Solicit candid feedback from a broad cross-section of the Westminster community
- Identify key themes, opportunities, local values, preferences, and needs related to PRL in Westminster

This report is organized into three parts:

1. Methodology: summarizes the event or outreach strategy
2. Results Summary: key themes and takeaways from each event
3. Appendix: complete engagement results

EVENTS TO DATE

Date	Event	Location	Attendees/ Respondents
9/14	PRLOSAB	City Hall	12
10/9	City Staff Kick Off	City Park Rec Center	26
10/9-10/10	Constituent Focus Groups	City Park Rec Center & City Hall Conf. Room	22
10/21	Westy Fest	City Park	342
8/23-10/5	Online Questionnaire #1	Online	1,105
11/1	Public Open House #1	The MAC	35
11/15	PRLOSAB & Youth Advisory Panel	City Hall	27
TOTAL ENGAGED			1,569

Over a 10-week period from August to November, the project team engaged Westminster constituents and community members through a variety of methods including in-person and online engagement opportunities. Each engagement strategy is highlighted below.

On October 9, 2023 the project team hosted a staff kick off event attended by more than 20 staff members representing each City department. The project team provided a brief presentation that addressed the need for the Vision Plan, planning context, preliminary results of the first questionnaire, staff roles, and overall project timeline. After the presentation, the consultant team facilitated a small group discussion activity in which staff responded to a series of questions intended to identify the role of the Vision Plan in achieving the City's overarching vision statement, goals for the planning process, as well as PRL opportunities and challenges. After discussion, each group selected a spokesperson to share their results with the larger group.



The project team conducted a series of four 90-minute focus groups on October 9 and 10, 2023. Approximately 65 individuals were invited to participate in the focus groups. Attendees represented a wide range of PRL constituents and partners including Jeffco Library; Legacy Foundation; Jeffco Open Space; Mile High Flood District; former City of Westminster employees; current library and archives staff; the City's appointed Parks, Recreation, Libraries, and Open Space Board; Hyland Hills Recreation District; Westminster Public Schools, Growing Home, North Metro Arts Alliance, and Butterfly Pavilion. Each focus group discussed the same series of questions aimed at illuminating current challenges, opportunities, and successful outcomes for the planning process.

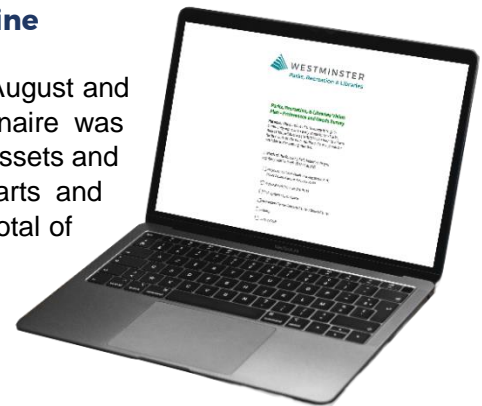




Westy Fest

The City's Core Team staffed a pop-up engagement booth on Saturday (10/21/23) at Westy Fest held at City Park. With 42,000 attendees, Westy Fest was the highest attended City event since the COVID-19 pandemic. Two-hundred and six festival attendees visited the booth to learn more about the project and respond to a series of questions using their mobile devices. Poll questions were available in both English and Spanish. Additionally, City staff handed out 500 postcards promoting the public open house on November first.

Online



Questionnaire #1

The first community-wide online questionnaire launched in mid-August and collected responses through October 5th, 2023. The questionnaire was structured to collect information on public use of the City's PRL assets and understand community preferences for strategies to support arts and culture, health and wellness, and sustainability through PRL. A total of 1,105 responses were collected.



Public Open House #1

The first of two planned public events for the Vision Plan was held on November 1, 2022 to provide a formal in-person opportunity for the community to be introduced to the planning process and provide input on the PRL facilities and amenities that are most important to them. The open house included a scrolling presentation with pertinent plan information, interactive activity stations, and a map station. The event provided a light meal and childcare for attendees. Translated materials and Spanish interpretation services were also provided. Approximately thirty-five community members attended the open house.

RESULTS SUMMARY: KEY POINTS & TAKEAWAYS

A high-level summary of the key points and takeaways from each engagement event is provided below. Emerging themes that resonated consistently across *all* events are highlighted on the right side of each page below. For additional details, see the complete engagement results at the end of this document.

City Staff Kick Off

- Identify and maintain community support for the plan
- Adapt services to meet the needs of a changing demographic
- Provide services equitably and inclusively across the City for all populations
- Prioritize maintenance
- Secure sufficient future staffing and revenue sources
- Build on the City's identity by reinvesting in spaces that already serve the community and ensure vibrancy
- Create goals with clear benchmarks and timelines
- Ensure that the plan is flexible and actionable
- Develop partnerships and collaboration opportunities

01 Emerging Theme

EQUITY & INCLUSION. Provide PRL services equitably and inclusively across the City for *all* populations.

Staff Responses to: "This plan will be a success if..."



Constituent Focus Groups

- Recognize multiculturalism and inclusivity of all populations, especially with accessibility for all languages
- Ensure PRL has multigenerational offerings and methods of communication
- Increase connectivity between and among parks and open spaces
- Protect the longevity of PRL resources through sustainable management and investment in maintenance of infrastructure, facilities, and services
- Plan for adequate staffing recruitment, retention, diversity in hiring, and inclusivity training
- Restore open spaces to support resilience and biodiversity
- Expand partnerships and funding avenues
- Continue to offer services, facilities, and programs that are responsive to changes in the community's needs
- Provide support for those experiencing homelessness
- Distribute services and spaces across the City equitably

02 Emerging Theme

CARE FOR WHAT WE HAVE.

Protect the longevity of PRL resources through sustainable management and investment in maintenance and lifecycle replacement of existing PRL infrastructure, facilities, and services.

03 Emerging Theme

CONNECT THE CITY. Engagement participants consistently and frequently identified the need to fill gaps in trail connectivity and expand the trail system.

Responses to the question, "What are the strengths of the PRL department?"



Westy Fest

The English language poll received 199 responses, while the Spanish language poll received seven responses. After Westy Fest the polls remained open eventually receiving 333 English responses and nine Spanish responses.

Most desired neighborhood amenities:

- 1) Pools; 2) farmers markets; 3) trail connections (English language poll)
- 1) Community gardens; 2) public art (Spanish language poll)

Strategies to best support health and wellness:

- Respondents to both the English and Spanish versions of the poll rated trails and sports courts/playing fields as their top choices. Differing responses are as follows:
 - Farmers markets, community gardens (English language poll)
 - Recreation classes, personal trainers, youth programming, public pools (Spanish language poll)



Strategies to incorporate sustainability into the PRL system:

- Respondents to both the English and Spanish versions of the poll rated increasing tree canopy and expanding trails as top choices. Differing responses are as follows:
 - Increase native vegetation (English language poll)
 - Dog clean-up facilities (Spanish language poll)

Online Questionnaire #1

- The City's trails and open spaces are the most visited PRL facilities (67%), followed by libraries (56%) and recreation/fitness centers (56%)
- Consistent with their popularity as the most visited amenity, trails are also the most needed, according to questionnaire respondents (53%)
- Forty-eight percent (48%) of respondents identified the creation of a performance venue for theater, dance, and concerts as their top-rated strategy for supporting the City's history, arts, and culture
- Respondents would like to see the PRL system support sustainability through preserving additional open space (64%), supporting pollinators through native plantings (61%), and increasing tree canopy (57%)
- For supporting community health and wellness, respondents once again selected trails as their top choice, specifically, closing gaps in the trail system (62%).
- Most-desired neighborhood amenities include farmer's market (37%) and Trails (37%); services to support the aging (28%); and designated bicycle routes (27%)

04 Emerging Theme

SUSTAINABILITY. Prioritize sustainable management practices and opportunities to "green" PRL services and operations.

05 Emerging Theme

PARTNERSHIPS. Leverage partnerships with recreation districts, school districts, other PRL service providers, community organizations and volunteer groups to enhance or expand offerings to residents efficiently and cost-effectively.

Public Open House #1

- The most important parks amenities, ranked in order, are playgrounds; shade and benches; and pollinator gardens
- The most important recreation programs and amenities, ranked in order, are aquatics facilities and programs; older adult programs; and adult programs
- The most important history, arts, and culture programs and amenities, ranked in order, are special events such as Westy Fest; performance venues; and history tours
- The most important library programs and amenities, in order, are the physical collection (books, DVDs, videogames, etc.); the digital collection (e-books, movies, music, etc.)
- The most important golf programs and services, ranked in order, are hosting non-golf community events; course conditions; and the clubhouse/restaurant
- The most important open space and trail programs and amenities, ranked in order, are shade and benches; soft surface walking trails; and restrooms at trailheads
- At a mapping station, attendees identified the need for a recreation center in the north quadrant of the City and multiple locations in need of trail infrastructure
- Attendees provided open-ended comments citing the need for increased ranger presence at parks and open space, a desire for a greenway along Federal Boulevard, maintenance of existing parks and assets, an arts and culture center with performance venue, greater variety of programs, and waterwise landscaping

06 Emerging Theme

LOVE FOR LIBRARIES.

Westminster libraries provide much more than books and are critical service centers in the community that should be enhanced and expanded.

07 Emerging Theme

A HOME FOR HISTORY, ARTS, & CULTURE.

Engagement participants consistently cited a need for a cultural center with a performance venue among other amenities to support the arts.

